

AFTER



Bridge at Seitz Creek,
Grays Harbor County,
replaces culvert allowing
fish to pass freely.



BEFORE

Family Forest Fish Passage Program

2010 Implementation Report

**A Cost-Share
Program
for Small Forest
Landowners
to Improve Fish
Passage**



Washington
Department of
**FISH and
WILDLIFE**



WASHINGTON STATE
Recreation and
Conservation Office



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources
Peter Goldmark - Commissioner of Public Lands



WISHKAH PROJECT

Grays Harbor Conservation District and local contractors completed the Wishkah barrier correction (landowners at left). The new bridge will help reduce erosion and allow for fish passage.

“I am absolutely tickled with the quality of the project and to have fish returning to our creek this fall. When the road was put in 50 years ago we had no idea the impact it would have on generations of salmon. We are very thankful for the Family Forest Fish Passage Program and to have fish returning and a new bridge to access our tree farm.”

HERB AND DELORES WELCH
SMALL FOREST LANDOWNERS
[WISHKAH PROJECT]

It is estimated that for every \$100,000 invested in fish passage projects, 1.57 local jobs are created during the construction season. This estimate does not include the additional indirect jobs like culvert and bridge manufacturing.

Investment in Removal of Fish Barriers Pays Many Dividends

With the passage of the 1999 Forest and Fish rules, new regulations were established that required all forest landowners to replace fish barriers on streams associated with their forest road crossings. To a small landowner this cost (\$50,000 to \$150,000) can be substantial and raise the risk that they might sell their lands to developers. Recognizing these potential impacts, the 2003 Washington State Legislature created the Family Forest Fish Passage Program to help reduce the regulatory and monetary burdens on small family forest landowners and reconnect critical fish habitat.

A legislative investment of \$17 million during the last seven years has paid dividends: 500 miles of fish habitat are reconnected and 232 fish barriers corrected.

The job is not done however. Currently, there is a backlog of more than 400 landowners who have applied to the program to have barriers corrected and fish habitat reconnected.

The average cost to correct a fish barrier in 2008-2009 was \$88,000. Current funding allows for about 30 projects a year, which creates about 50 jobs during the construction season.

The Wishkah project featured in this report was completed in 2010 for Herb and Dolores Welch. The United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) shared funding via a restoration grant.

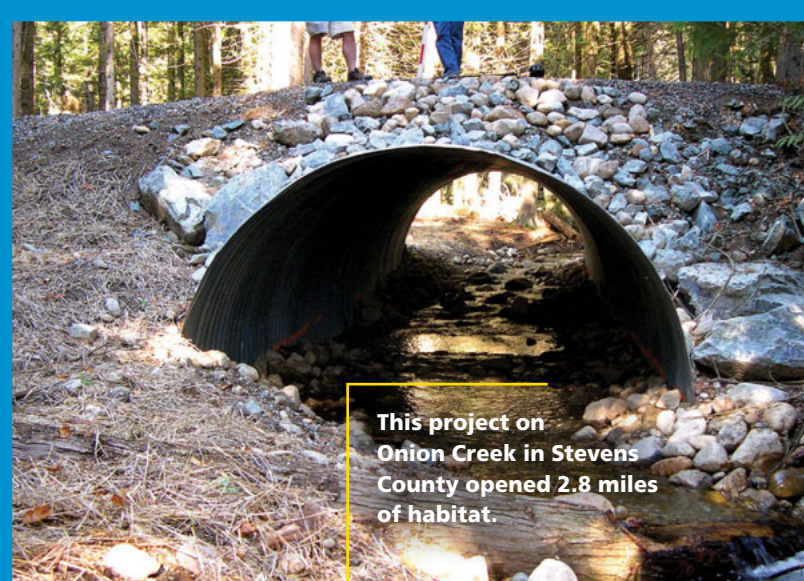
The Welch family has managed its tree farm since the late 1930s. Herb remembers scores of salmon returning to the creek each fall until the culvert became a barrier.

“They were so thick you could pitch-fork them from the bank,” he said.

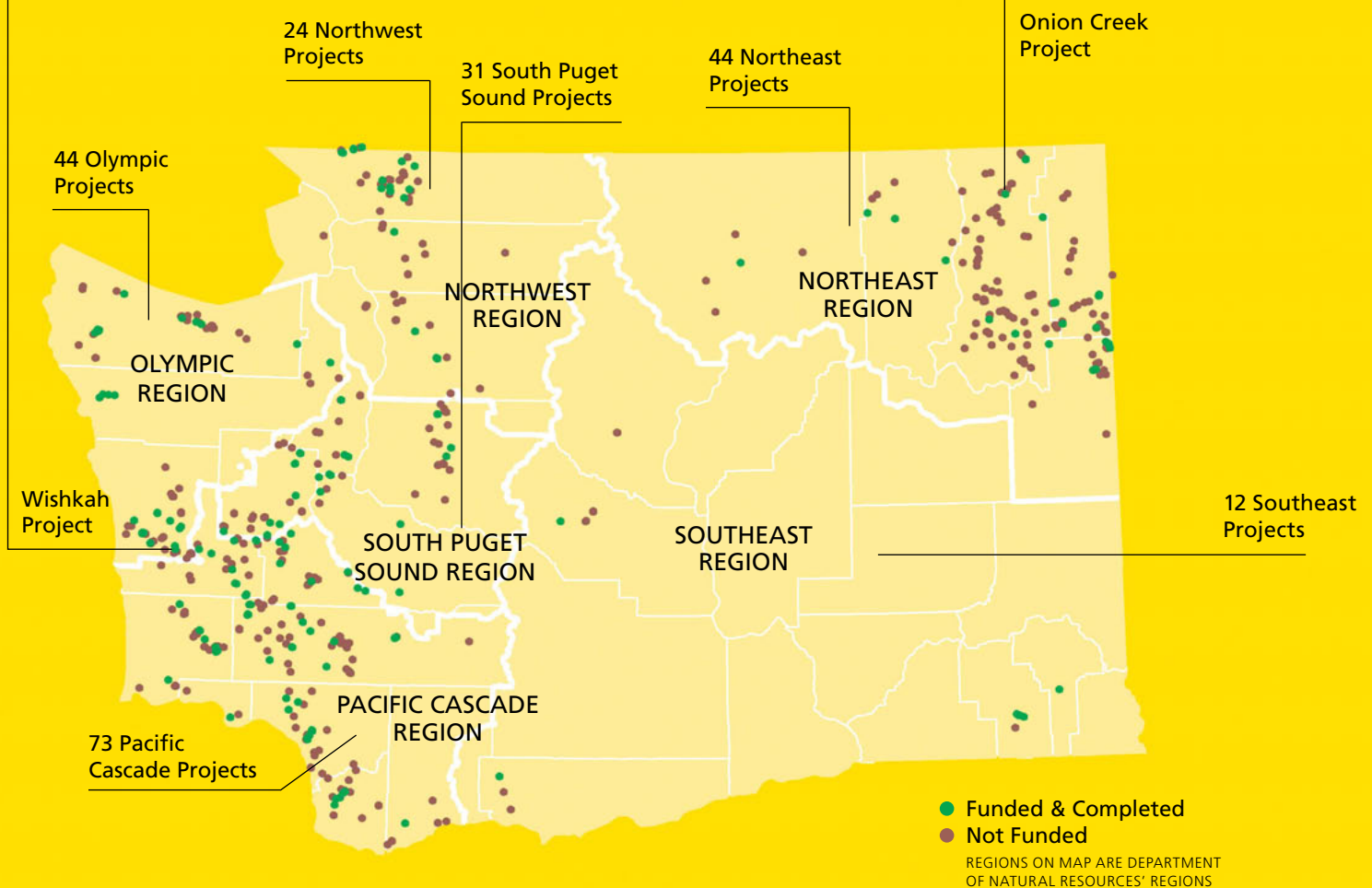
Now, with the help of the sponsor (Grays Harbor Conservation District) and the Family Forest Fish Passage Program, those teams of fish are expected to return to the stream any day.



Final installation of the new fish friendly bridge on the Wishkah project.



This project on Onion Creek in Stevens County opened 2.8 miles of habitat.



Funded and Unfunded Family Forest Fish Passage Projects

Fish Program Aids Small Forest Landowners

3.2 million acres* of forestland in Washington are owned by small forest landowners. **Ten thousand miles** of fish-bearing streams flow through these mid- and low-elevation forest lands and provide high value, prime

fish habitat. Small family forest landowners have long periods of time between harvests and significant financial burdens to implement fish barrier corrections and road maintenance projects. The state Family Forest Fish Passage

Program provides financial assistance to small family forest landowners and is one of the critical links in a comprehensive approach to forest road management.

* ROGERS, LUKE W., A. COOKE. (2010). THE WASHINGTON STATE FORESTLAND DATABASE (2007 VERSION, RELEASE 2). DIGITAL DATA, MARCH, 2010. SEATTLE, WA, UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON.

// The Family Forest Fish Passage Program is a well-managed government program which uses public tax dollars prudently for the benefit of the public resource and small forest land owners."

SAM COMSTOCK
WASHINGTON FARM FORESTRY ASSOCIATION

Road to Recovery

The Family Forest Fish Passage Program is implemented by three state agencies: Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, and the Recreation and Conservation Office. Each agency brings its expertise to oversee the program's operations, outreach and project selection processes. An oversight steering committee approves annual projects and keeps procedures current. The Washington Farm Forestry Association joins the steering committee as a landowner organization.

The Family Forest Fish Passage program recognizes the critical role small family forest landowners' play in salmon populations and is committed to assisting with their economic viability. The Family Forest Fish Passage Program benefits are seen through:

- Creating jobs and economic opportunities in rural communities.
- Honoring and implementing Indian treaty fishing rights.
- Sustaining our forest industry and encourage renewable green products.
- Improving water quality in forested watershed by reducing sediment delivery to streams and spawning areas.
- Minimizing flooding and the downstream harm to habitat and property.
- Helping the recovery of Puget Sound.

Local Groups are the Cornerstone to the Program

Local groups (sponsors) experienced in fish passage corrections complete most of the projects. Sponsors manage the project design, construction oversight, permitting, billing,

and grant management. A sponsor may be a Conservation District, Regional fisheries enhancement group, Local fish-related non-profit organization, Tribe, or other interested organization.

Project Sponsors

REGIONAL FISHERIES ENHANCEMENT GROUPS

Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force
Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group
Mid-Sound Salmon Enhancement Group
Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association
Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group
Stilly-Snohomish Task Force
Tri-State Steelheaders
Willapa Bay Fisheries Enhancement Group

PRIVATE SPONSORS

Fisheries Consultants
Frame, LLC
LWC Consulting
PB Lumber
Pacific Coast Salmon Coalition
Pacific Forest Management
Stewardship Partners
Wild Fish Conservancy

CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Cascadia Conservation District
Clallam Conservation District
Clark Conservation District
Cowlitz Conservation District
Ferry Conservation District
Grays Harbor Conservation District
Jefferson County Conservation District
Kitsap Conservation District
Kittitas County Conservation District
Lewis County Conservation District
Mason Conservation District
Okanogan Conservation District
Pacific Conservation District
Pend Oreille Conservation District
Spokane County Conservation District
Stevens County Conservation District
Thurston Conservation District
Underwood Conservation District
Wahkiakum Conservation District

TRIBES

Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation
Kalispel Tribe of Indians
Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe
Nooksack Indian Tribe
Spokane Tribe of Indians
Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians
Tulalip Tribes

How Do I Get More Information?

Visit our website:
www.dnr.wa.gov/sflo

Program Partners

PROGRAM OUTREACH

Department of Natural Resources Small Forest Landowner Office

Natural Resources Building
1111 Washington Street
MS 47012
Olympia, WA 98504-7012
(360) 902-1400
TTY: (360) 902-1125 TRS: 411
www.dnr.wa.gov

PROJECT EVALUATION AND RANKING

Department of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Management Program

600 Capitol Way
Olympia, WA 98501-1091
(360) 902-2352
TTY: (360) 902-2207
www.wdfw.wa.gov

PROGRAM FUNDING

Recreation Conservation Office

Natural Resources Building
MS 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917
(360) 902-3000
TDD: (360) 902-1996
www.rco.wa.gov

LANDOWNER ORGANIZATION

Washington Farm Forestry Association

PO Box 1010
Chehalis, WA 98532
Contact: Sam Comstock (360) 736-5750
<http://www.wafarmforestry.com/>

The above agencies are responsible for implementing the program. The Washington Farm Forestry Association joins the agencies on a steering committee.

